

# Best Practices for Attracting Highly Qualified and Qualified Third-Country Nationals in the EU

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- Centre for Migration Studies was established at the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences in 2011
- The aim of the Centre is
  - to coordinate and carry out research and analysis on migration, integration and asylum policy
  - to encourage informed decision-making in the field of migration, integration and asylum
  - to promote discussion between government institutions, private sector and NGOs
  - to draw attention to acute issues in the field of migration, integration and asylum



- The EMN is co-ordinated by the European Commission with National Contact Points established in each EU Member State plus Norway.
- Estonian EMN NCP is located at the Centre for Migration Studies
- The aim of EMN is to provide the Community institutions and Member States' authorities with up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum; support policymaking in these areas and provide the general public with information on these subjects



# Global Competition for Talent



- The research suggests that, with the possible exception of the UK, both high- and low-skilled immigrants most likely see the considered European destinations as less attractive than the United States, Canada, or Australia
- According to the OECD migrants from third countries living in European countries have a significantly lower level of education on average than those living in Canada or Australia
- The aim of the study was to provide an overview of national policies and practical measures aimed at attracting (highly) qualified third-country nationals for the purpose of work to the EU;
- This analysis was prepared on the basis of contributions from 23 countries  
Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom



# Definitions



- No commonly applicable definition.
- The most common denominators consider level of education, the type of job (occupation) or salary level
  - Blue Card directive definition (Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovak Republic, Lithuania)
  - Several concepts are used (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Slovenia, United Kingdom)
  - Developing and adopting concepts (Estonia (01.09.2013), Spain)
  - No specific definition (Cyprus, Malta, Sweden)
- For the purposes of this study (highly) skilled worker was defined as:
  - Third-country national, who has reached ISCED classification level 5 (BA, MA) and 6 education (PhD)
  - And is holding a position 1-3 within ISCO (managers, professionals and technicians and associate Professionals)



# Types of Policies in Member States



- Part of wider migration policy (Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden)
- Targeted policies at (highly) qualified migrants (Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Ireland, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom)
- No national policies or provisions for attracting (highly) qualified third-country nationals (Cyprus, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta and Poland)
- Points-based systems (Austria, Netherlands, Slovenia, United Kingdom)
- Employer-led (Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom)
- Other approaches - inviting employers to actively contribute to exercises to forecast labour demand and to identify specific occupations/ sectors in which demand is exceeding the national supply (Greece, Italy) and in UK, the occupational shortage list is consulted prior to changes being implemented.





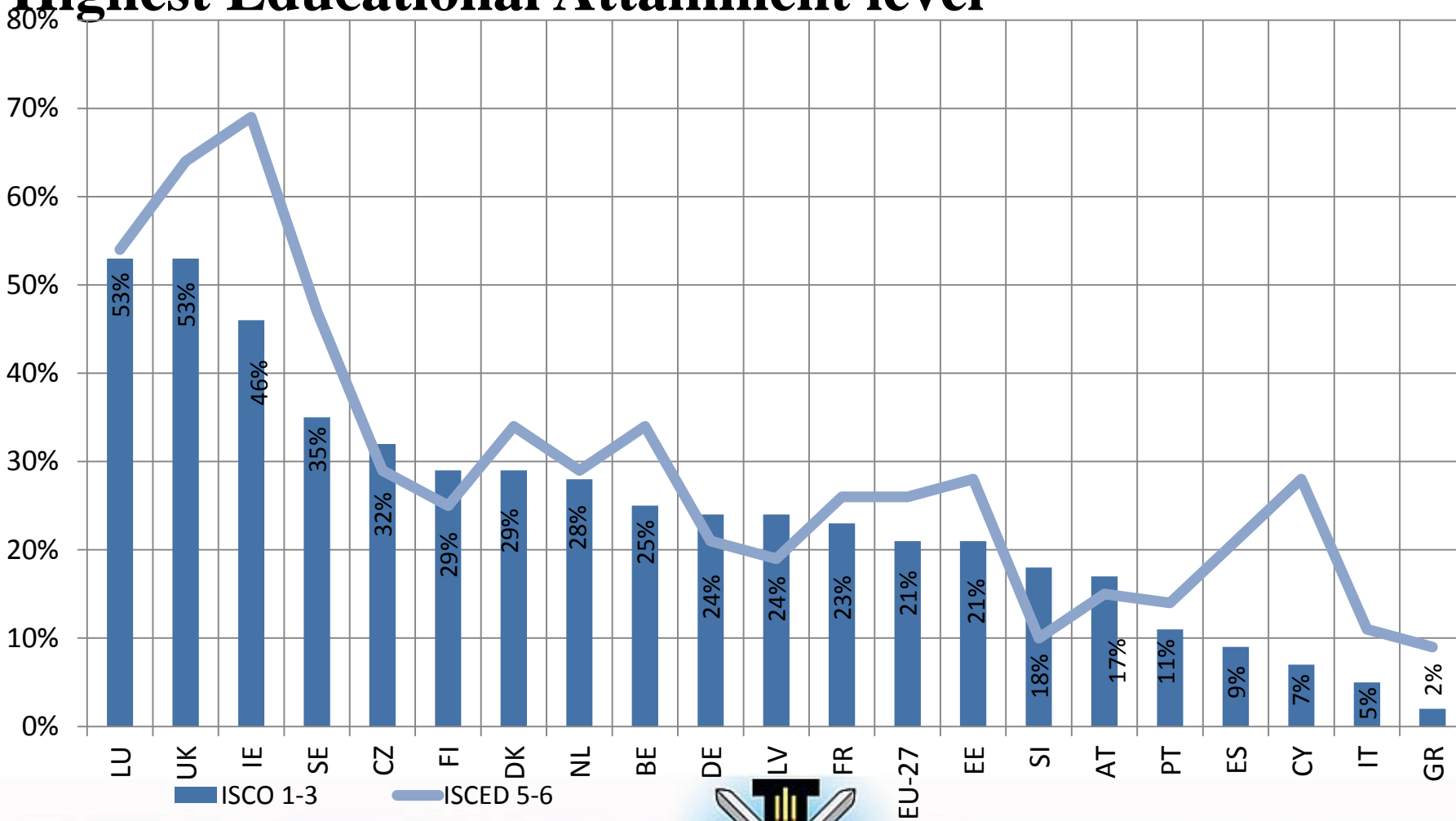
# The Number of Highly Skilled Third-Country Nationals in the EU



- According to Eurostat's Labour Force Surveys, in EU-27 between 2008 and 2012, there has been a slight increase in the proportional employment of third-country nationals in high-skill occupations in the total employed population (from 4.06% to 4.29%)
- In the EU in 2012, out of all employed third-country nationals, 26% had reached the highest educational attainment level (university degree and/or PhD, pertaining to ISCED categories 5-6) and 21% of them were working as either managers, professionals, technicians or associate professionals (falling into ISCO categories 1-3).



# The Share of Third-Country Nationals Employed in ISCO categories 1-3 (2012) + having Reached the Highest Educational Attainment level



Source: Eurostat



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# International Co-operation Brain Drain and Circulation



- Most of the Member States do not address the issues of brain drain and brain circulation in their national policies to attract (highly) qualified third-country nationals.
- The focus of their policies is to find the most qualified and to encourage their long-term settlement.
- Co-operation with countries of origin (Finland, Slovak Republic), bilateral agreements (Slovenia)
- Independent inquiry (Sweden)
- Refusal of the application in cases where the relevant sector in the worker's country of origin is experiencing a lack of qualified workers (Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom)
- Programmes for returnees (Germany)





# Political Priorities in Estonia

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- Attracting highly qualified and qualified foreigners to live and work in Estonia is outlined as a separate goal in the Government Action Plan 2011-2015.
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications has adopted the Entrepreneurship Growth Strategy for the new programming period 2014-2020, which also emphasises the importance of attracting the (highly) qualified workers to Estonia (talent politics)
- The state sponsors partially the employment of (highly) qualified workers with international (professional) experience since 2008. The development employee grant scheme is managed by Enterprise Estonia
- Internationalisation strategy for Estonian higher education institutions 2006-2015
- Bring Talent Home programme 2009



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# Labour Market Situation in Estonia



- According to the Forecast 2019 Estonia will need approximately 27,400 top specialists by the year 2019 (e.g. 3400 specialists per year). Additionally, the forecast includes predictions on people leaving labour force (retirement, mortality) and movement between sectors.
- Net migration -6629 persons in 2012, however the share of returnees among all immigrants has increased 2000-2011 (28 000 persons)
  - 52% of them are Estonians and 62% Estonian nationals
  - 43% aged 30-50 years old and 44% have higher education
  - 60% are economically active , unemployed 12% (ca 2000 persons)
- Total Fertility Rate 2012 1,59
- Dependency ratio 2013 – 50,9
- Demographic labour pressure index – 0,76



# Estonian System



- Extensive consultations with social partners to make the arrival conditions for qualified workers smoother
- The focus on groups with low risk of abuse and violation of the admission system
  - Entering Estonia with a visa and applying for resident permit in Estonia
- Introduction the definition of highly-skilled worker
  - Senior or top specialist is a foreigner who has professional training or experience in any area of activity, whose employer is registered in Estonia and has agreed to pay the foreigner at least the latest annual average wages in Estonia published by Statistics Estonia, multiplied by the coefficient 2. (Aliens Act §181 (4)).
  - General salary threshold coefficient is 1.24. This applies to experts, advisors and consultants. (Aliens Act §107)
  - The EU Blue card holder's general salary threshold is 1.5 (Aliens Act §190<sup>7</sup>)
- Policy does not distinguish between highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals



# Employer-led System



- Estonia employs job-based recruitment system that gives employers the possibility to hire foreigners on the basis of the needs of the company.
- The state can influence immigration through the immigration quota (up to 0,1% of the total population per year)
- Labour market test - permission from the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund before employing the third-country national, following the public competition
- As of 2013 temporary employment positions are exempt from the test. The permission will from now on be based on the assessment of the labour force and market situation by the Unemployment Insurance Fund



# Blue Cards issued in Estonia

Citizenship	Occupation				Total
	Science and engineering	Health professionals	Business and administration	ICT professionals	
Russia	1	4		5	10
Ukraine		2			2
Belarus				1	1
Moldova		1			1
Brazil	1				1
Guyana			1		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>

Age breakdown	2011	2012
25-34	1	10
35-44		5
45-54		1
55-64		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>

Sex	2011	2012
Male		11
Female	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>

Source: Police and Border Guard Board

and Eurostat



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# Challenges and Barriers

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- Characteristics which are inherent to the Member State's culture, history and traditions
  - Language (Austria, Finland, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden, Slovak Republic)
  - Work place discrimination (Ireland, Italy)
  - public debate related to immigration (Austria, Slovak Republic, Germany and Latvia),
- Economic, social and educational factors – economic crisis, salaries/wages, working conditions (Belgium, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, the Netherlands, Slovak Republic and Spain)
- Immigration rules and measures – bureaucracy, lack of information, waiting time to process visa applications in the Member State (Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom)



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# Best Practices I



- Maintaining an open, employer-driven system for labour immigration (Sweden).
- Tax advantages (France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands);
- Improved family reunification rights (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, France, Greece, Lithuania, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden);
- The provision of relevant, up-to-date information and guidance (Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Slovenia)
- The establishment of focal points in some selected third countries (Slovenia).
- Using premium services to speed up the processing time (Spain, the UK);
- Fixing a salary threshold in order for the salaries to be at an achievable level (Estonia), or to avoid excessive pressure on some sectors (Luxembourg);



# Best Practices II



- Ensuring that (highly) qualified third country nationals are employed in sectors showing a shortage of domestic supply (Luxembourg). This also implies a better and more efficient shortage/needs analysis (Slovenia);
- Involvement of national institutions in scrutinising whether applicants are of the right calibre for talent routes as such institutions can identify exceptionally talented applicants well (United Kingdom).
- The establishment of a system for the regular evaluation of policies, strategies and schemes (Germany, Netherlands and the United Kingdom)
- Focussing the policies not only on attracting (highly) qualified third-country nationals but also on effectively retaining them (Netherlands).
- Replacing generic highly-skilled routes by more specialised routes for exceptionally talented individuals, qualified workers and employees of international companies (Czech Republic, United Kingdom)



# Conclusions



- Member States which had specific policies and measures in place to attract (highly) qualified immigrants saw an increase in their proportion on the total number of employees in (highly) qualified occupational levels
- Only a few Member States have specific evaluation systems in place for regularly assessing the impacts of policies aimed to attract highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals
- The focus on attracting self-employed persons, entrepreneurs and investors is also increasing in the EU (in 2007 7 countries, 2012 -13 countries)



# THANK YOU!

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